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ABSTRACT

Scholars and practitioners in the field of multicultural education need a historical perspective on the role of cultural pluralism throughout U.S. history. This paper begins by tracing the role schools have played in socializing people to assimilate to an Anglo-Saxon society and discussing the rise of the ideals of cultural pluralism in U.S. schools. Rising nationalism after the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, combined with the growing need for a work force in the Industrial Revolution, spurred the rise of common schools in the 1800s. Large, diverse urban populations made educators more aware of the role of schools as a unifying force. As a result, all of the states had compulsory education laws by 1930, the core curriculum being strongly influenced by the Anglo-Saxon interpretation of Americanism. The paper describes Banks' model of ethnic revitalization, using it to frame an understanding of assimilation efforts in New York and Minnesota in the early 1900s, then discusses possible reasons why the multiethnic movement of the 1970s failed to replace Eurocentrism with democratic cultural pluralism. The following suggestions are made for those in the field of multicultural education: (1) provide equal access to benefits for all members of society, shifting from a win-lose to a win-win philosophy; (2) recognize the diversity between and within cultures and not rely on polarized education programs; (3) understand oneself as a cultural being; (4) recognize and counter deficit models of achievement; and (5) increase skills necessary for a culturally diverse society. A list of 45 references is appended. (CJS)

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A Paradigm for Examining Multicultural Education

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Many scholars in the field of multicultural education see its formal inception at around the time of the Civil Rights Movement (ex. Gay 1983; Sleeter and Grant, 1987). Bennett (1990) defines multicultural education as "an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs and seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world." Although the ideals of multicultural education have gained acceptance in the past several years, the way scholars and practitioners approach it varies tremendously. Sleeter and Grant (1987) found five general approaches to the field that included 1) teaching the culturally different, 2) human relations, 3) single group studies, 4) multicultural education and 5) education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist orientations.

With such diversity in orientations to the field, it is important for people to come together and share a common vision in order to make a stronger impact in the future. Internal conflicts on how to best achieve democratic cultural pluralism in America could potentially do harm to the cause itself. The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, the author traces the role schools have played in socializing people to assimilate to an Anglo-Saxon society from a historical perspective. Second, the author will discuss the rise of the ideals of cultural pluralism in American schools. Third, the current state of the field of multicultural education will be discussed with implications for the future.

Historical Practices in American Education

During Colonial America, religious and regional differences dictated educational goals. In New England, the Puritans believed it was important for everyone to be able to read the Bible and interpret its readings. Religious and educational training were synonymous and seen as essential to raising moral children. Parents felt an obligation to educate their children. In 1642 Massachusetts passed a law requiring parents to educate their children. This paved the way for common schooling. The middle and southern states were not so active in pooling funds together for educational purposes. The southern states consisted mainly of Anglicans who did not have the strong religious convictions of the Puritans. This, combined with the plantation style of living saw Southerners hiring private tutors. The middle states were very heterogeneous in terms of religions and nationalities. Private schools flourished and the use of public funds to educate children did not become customary (Ryan and Cooper, 1984).

Although America consisted of an assortment of nationalities and religions, the Anglo-Saxon culture emerged as dominant. Much of this was reflected in the status of English (the language of the Anglo-Saxon culture) at the time of the Revolutionary War. At the time, English was recognized in general use across vocations and everyday situations. English education was a symbol of "breeding." Most universities and colleges had their instruction in English (Heath and Mandabach, 1979). There were many cases where English

settlers tried to repress the retention of German because of its inherit "inferiority" (Hawgood, 1970; Weaver, 1970).

The Revolutionary War and War of 1812 saw the rise of American nationalism. A common schooling system was seen as a vehicle to indoctrinate patriotic and nationalistic attitudes. Differential loyalties or nationalistic ideals could destroy the young nation. Schools were a way to assimilate a very diverse society into one unified American society. People like Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, Noah Webster, and George Washington fought for public education (Johanningmeier, 1980). Nationalism, combined with the growing need to prepare a work force in the midst of an Industrial Revolution, saw the rise of common schools in the 1800's. Also, population in the urban areas grew rapidly. The hodgepodge of people in the large metropolitan areas made educators more aware of the necessity of schools to stabilize a diverse society (Johanningmeier, 1980). By 1850, two states had compulsory education laws. By 1900, thirty two states had such laws and all states did by 1930 (Ryan and Cooper, 1984).

Since schools were seen as a unifying force in our young nation, a common curriculum was emphasized. The core curriculum was strongly influence by the Anglo-Saxon culture interpretation of Americanism. Textbooks taught students to love the country, respect authority, work hard, obey laws, and respect the Sabbath (Johanningmeier, 1980). The most popular books in the 1800's were the six-volume McGuffy readers of which over 100 million copies

were sold between 1836 and 1906. The McGuffy texts were written in American English (Ryan and Cooper, 1984).

By the mid 1800's, Webster's dictionary was widely used. Increasingly, English grammar and composition books and the popular press promoted the value of standard English and the use of English by all citizens. These skills were promoted in order to be "good American citizens" (Heath and Mandabach, 1979).

Because of the nature of immigration in the early 1800's, there was little opposition to assimilate into the predominantly Anglo-Saxon oriented school system. There were only small numbers of immigrants coming to America in the early 1800's. Also, most were eager to become "Americans" to escape religious and political oppression (Seller, 1977).

Immigration patterns changed dramatically in the second half of the 1800's. Large numbers of immigrants came to America. The American population doubled from 1860 to 1890. The population tripled from the years 1890 to 1914 (Seller, 1977).

National origin shifted dramatically. Whereas previous immigrants came mostly from Northern Europe, the latter immigrants came mostly from southern or eastern Europe. Most were Roman Catholic and non-English speaking (Higham, 1965). There were strong fears that the new immigrants would threaten existing American values and lifestyles. To compound the conflict, America went through economic hardships. The Nativist Movement of the late 1800's and early 1900's blamed the new immigrants for the economic depression. World War I made the Americanization

process, based on Anglo-Saxon assimilation, a popular crusade. Restrictive immigration bills were passed to limit the influx of people coming to America. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 severely limited the influx of Japanese and Chinese immigrants in the west. The Johnson Act of 1921 and the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 restricted the flow of eastern and southern Europeans in the east.

The Nativist Movement ideals were deeply entrenched in American education by the beginning of the twentieth century. The process of immigrant socialization came under the name of Americanization. Cubberley (1909), one of the nation's leading educators, described the goals of the Americanization process as

> to break these groups of settlements, to assimilate and amalgamate these people as a part of our American race and to implant in their children...the Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law and order, and popular government, and to awaken in them a reverence for our democratic institutions and for those things in our national life which we as people hold to be of abiding worth.

Education was meant mostly for white males. Education thus heavily emphasized the assimilation of diverse populations to the male, white, Anglo-Saxon orientation. Education for African-Americans, Native-Americans, and Hispanics found a different road. The Negro Yearbook of 1931-32 lists twenty four Black schools founded before 1860, the first being established for Negroes and Indians in Virginia in 1620 (Cunningham and Osborn, 1979; Corder and Quisenberry, 1987). However, most Africans arrived in America as slaves and no systematic provision for their education was made.

In the 1800's, several denominations tried to establish schools to teach religion and basic literacy skills to slaves. However, fear of slave rebellions prompted many of these schools in the south to be closed (Corder and Quisenberry, 1987). Competition for jobs with educated African-Americans in the North resulted in violence toward Black education establishments (Crosby, 1977). Therefore, while common schools gained in public popularity for European-Americans, African-Americans were separated and denied education. Even after the Civil War, African-Americans were to remain separated from Whites and thus kept from assimilating and reaping full societal benefits. The 1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson decision legally formalized "separate but equal" attitudes of the American government.

Education for Native-Americans and Hispanics also was characteristic of separation from European-Americans. For Hispanics and Native-Americans, education was first seen as religious. Once Native-Americans were put on reservations, missionaries tried to "civilize" them. By the 1890's the government tried to assimilate Native-Americans by teaching them skills of the White society. Hispanics also had their language and culture denied in the process of educational assimilation (Ryan and Cooper, 1984; Adams, 1988; Garcia, 1984). Thus, while the goal of education for African-Americans, Native-Americans, and Hispanics was to assimilate them to the predominantly male, Anglo-Saxon dominated society, the means were quite different than that of European-Americans. African-Americans, Native-Americans and Hispanics were a

conquered people, separated from the equal educational access allowed to European-Americans.

Current Multicultural Education and the rise of educational equity

The patriotic fervor generated from World War I, the restrictive immigrations bills of the 1920's and the separatist actions taken toward people of color seemed to forever cement the foundation of Americanization in our schools. Despite the intense assimilation efforts, ethnic minorities mounted efforts to counter such pressures. Fishman (1972) felt that a common language could only promote nationalism in a diverse society if it broadened unity and stressed authenticity. To the extent our educational system did not stress authenticity, members of ethnic minority groups would actively maintain their native language. Kelman (1969, 1971) described two types of loyalty to a central government. Instrumental attachment is where the government provides for the functional well-being of its constituents. Sentimental attachment is described as fostered when the central government is seen as representative of them as being in some central way a reflection and extension of self. When ethnic minorities see themselves as unattached from the central government, it serves as the basis for anti-assimilation sentiment.

Banks (1986) describes this anti-assimilationist activity as ethnic revitalization. In ethnic revitalization movements, there must first be a precondition phase characterized by the existence of a history of colonialism, imperialism, racism, an institutionalized

democratic ideology, and efforts by the nation-state to close the gap between democratic ideals and societal realities. Victimized ethnic minorities expectations therefore rise. The precondition phase is dominated by an assimilationist orientation. The first phase of the movement then is characterized by ethnic polarization, an intense identity quest by victimized ethnic groups, and single-cause explanations of the problem. An effort is made by ethnic groups to make racism legitimized as a primary explanation of their problem. The second phase is characterized by meaningful dialogue between victimized and dominant ethnic groups, multiethnic coalitions, reduced ethnic polarization, and the search for multiple-cause explanations for the problems of victimized ethnic groups. The reduced polarization is manifested in a rise of what Banks calls cultural different orientations. The cultural different model states that minority youth have viable cultures that are functional and valuable for the nation-state. This contrasts to the cultural pluralism model that predominates in the first phase. The cultural pluralism model states that schools should promote ethnic identification and allegiances. Educational characteristics should reflect the characteristics of ethnic students. In the third and final phase some of the elements of the reforms formulated in the earlier phases become institutionalized. Other victimized cultural groups echo their grievances, thereby expanding and dispersing the focus of the ethnic reform movement. Conservative ideologies and policies become institutionalized during this phase, thus paving the way for the development of a new ethnic revitalization movement.

By the 1920's, the precondition phase described by Banks was apparent. Democratic ideals were espoused in the schools while actively supporting cultural genocide. Ethnic revitalization was manifested in two waves. The first wave was during the 1920's to World War II.

As a response to mounting Anglo-Saxon assimilation pressures, the Intercultural Educational Movement was initiated in New York. A fear of cultural loss and the rise of anti-Jewish sentiments displayed by Germany caused many European ethnic groups in America to fight to support ethnic studies. The fight for ethnic studies was not meant to revive ethnic consciousness but to avert racial intolerance (Montalto, 1982).

In Minnesota, Finnish and Slovenians opposed the public schools because they taught capitalist values and undermined ethnic culture. Southern Italian immigrants rejected public schooling because it indoctrinated their children with ideals antagonistic to traditional family life (Berman, 1974). Many eastern and southern Europeans would set up their own parochial schools systems in which their language, history and religious traditions could be taught. After school programs and church schools were set up for similar purposes (Bodner, 1976; Sanders, 1977, Fishman, 1966; Mohl, 1981).

Scholars, such as Kallen (1915), Berkson (1920) and Adamic (1934) commented on the immigration impact on America. Kallen (1934) urged for an ethnic pluralistic society in a series of articles in The Nation entitled "Democracy versus the Melting Pot." Berkson (1920) wrote against Americanization, or assimilationist ideals,

because they would destroy ethnic distinctions. Adamic (1934) argued that the morale and fate of second generation Europeans would have a profound effect on American society. This spurred debates on the fate of such Americans. While a minority of European-Americans challenged Anglo-assimilation, the "separate but equal" doctrine also came under attack finally culminating in the Brown vs. Board of Education Act of 1954.

The Black Revolt of the 1950's evolved to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. Ethnic revitalization in the 1950's and 1960's took on a different form with African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and Native-Americans leading the way instead of eastern and southern Europeans as in pre-World War II times.

Reasons for educational failure in this first phase of ethnic revitalization were singular. Genetic inferiority and cultural deficit theories were popular in explaining the reason people of color did poorly in education (Sue and Padilla, 1986). Compensatory programs, such as Project Headstart, were established to make up for cultural deficits children may have. Ethnic minorities, led by African-Americans, challenged the world view of themselves established by the dominant society. The world view of minorities as genetically or culturally inferior was rejected. Ethnic minorities instead attempted to create a different view of themselves by revitalizing ethnic studies in colleges and school curriculums. Gay (1983) describes the 1970's as a time of tremendous growth in the multiethnic movement.

America quickly entered the second phase of ethnic revitalization. This phase is marked by coalitions and multiple cause

explanations of student achievement. Coalitions of different groups (African-Americans, Chicanos, handicapped, women) were formed under the umbrella oppressed groups. Differing learning styles were popular in explaining education failures of African-Americans (Shade, 1982; Hale-Benson, 1986; Hilliard, 1976), Hispanics (Ramirez and Castañeda, 1974) and Native-Americans (Swisher and Deyhle, 1987).

However, in the late 1970's and 1980's the political climate changed. Instead of embracing non-white ethnic groups as allies in the struggle to dismantle Eurocentric domination and replace it with democratic cultural pluralism, institutional racism appeared to be on the rise. America had entered the final phase of ethnic revitalization (Giroux, 1990).

There were many explanations for this phenomena. First, setbacks in the domestic economy and U.S. reversals on the international level were explained by attacking liberal ideals. The civil rights movement succeeded in attaining the idea of racial equality. However, the decline of mass ethnic protests, increased presence of Black, Hispanic and Asian as well as White women in new positions, and passage of civil rights laws all suggested that inequalities have been remedied. Mainstream society became "colorblind" where racial considerations were never entertained. (Gay, 1983; Derman-Sparks, Higa, Sparks, 1980) Much of this colorblindness came from the inability of the white society to claim a unified culture and to deny that racism exists. Katz and Torres (1983) claim that the difficulty with explicating the white culture is

two-fold. First being white implies being part of the norm. It is difficult to identify with white culture because it is all around us. Second, white people see themselves as individuals rather than being connected to a group. Problems were confronted only on an individual level once legal systems of discrimination such as de jure segregations have been eliminated. This individualization not only releases one from the guilt of ones past, but frees one from the responsibility of social justice. Reverse discrimination charges were used to justify how liberals with cultural pluralistic orientations had overstepped their bounds in the name of individual fairness (Reynolds, 1982; Lynch and Beer, 1990).

Secondly, diversity within cultural groups has never been fully reconciled. For example, the women's movement has forced ethnic men to examine biases in themselves. Also, the need to define ethnic cultures alienated those that did not fit into the prevailing thought. Some ethnic minorities were seen as more "ethnic" than others. Those of oppressed minorities that were able to flourish in the dominant society had to reconcile feelings of accomplishment, ethnic pride, and selling out.

Third, the multiethnic movement did not address those of multiple cultural loyalties. In the Black-White rhetoric, what was the role of the child with a Black father and white mother? How about the white person who grew up and feels most comfortable in a predominantly Black neighborhood? How about the white child that lived in Asia for several years while his father was stationed

overseas? Those in the field of multicultural education had become too polarized in the eyes of some (Ravitch, 1990).

Fourth, it is often assumed that promotion of empathy and intercultural understanding will promote intercultural harmony. However, this striving for intercultural understanding is often in competition with the need for cultural pride (Allport, 1979). A most recent example was made evident in the war in the Persian Gulf. Unity among the American people was fostered by patriotic action, shared goals, and a common belief in the wrongdoings of Saddam Hussein. Increased empathy and understanding of Hussein's actions would only create divisiveness among the American people.

Future of Multicultural Education

The future of education in a multiculturally diverse society depends on equitable opportunity for power, knowledge and benefits of knowledge regardless of cultural background. To do so, educators must recognize and counter barriers to democratic cultural pluralism. Those interested in cultural equity must resolve conflicts inherit in a society that includes members with assimilationist, cultural different, and cultural pluralistic orientations. The following are suggestions for those in the field of multicultural education.

Shift from a win-lose to win-win philosophy

It is a natural tendency to want to feel good about oneself. A part of one's self-esteem is reflected in increased cultural pride. However, increased cultural pride cannot come at the detriment of putting down other cultures. In order for oppression to decrease, different cultures must live in a harmonious power relationship

where the livelihood of one helps the livelihood of the other. The polarization inherit in the assimilation versus cultural pluralism debate must be addressed. Ravitch (1990) states that we must recognize that if assimilation is to take place, it cannot be to a monocultural population. It must be replaced with a model of cultural pluralism. We must recognize that America has always been a pluralistic society. However, the assimilation to a pluralistic society will always be an unattainable ideal as long the pluralistic society is based on inequitable access to benefits.

Recognize diversity between and within cultures

A pluralistic society must not only respect the right to have a different cultural loyalty but the right of individuals to choose or live in a cultural lifestyle not based on past traditions, race or religion. Much of the difficulty in accomplishing this goal is the confusion many people have between race/ethnicity and culture. Race/ethnicity does not equate to culture. For example, educators may expose ethnic minorities to ethnic studies (history, literature, etc.) believing that they will incorporate this culture into their lives. The fallacy of this argument is that this only gives a narrow view of the ethnic student's culture as that based on his/her racial heritage and therefore not recognizing the multicultural nature of the child. Education programs based on a polarized viewpoint, whether they be Eurocentric or Afrocentric, must be carefully scrutinized before they are implemented (Honeman, 1990; Ratteray, 1990; Oliver, 1988).

Understand oneself as a cultural being

One must be given the opportunity to understand oneself as a cultural being. This is important to the ethnic minority that strives to understand oneself as reflected in ones cultural heritage. When one sees the assimilation process as subtractive, one will always feel resentment and oppressed. Understanding oneself as a cultural being is also true for members of the majority culture. The individualization process alleviates oneself from the social responsible to better our society. Multicultural educators must not present history of whites as solely oppressive. This will only create reactions of helpless guilt ("my ancestors were slave owners. I feel bad, but I can't do anything about that") or individualization ("my ancestors were oppressive, but there is so much more racial equality now, so minorities have no right to complain").

Recognize and counter deficit models of achievement

Genetic inferiority and cultural deficit theories are still widely used as reasons members of certain ethnic groups fail in our society. This is dangerous because they are often misinterpreted or based on faulty assumptions. Deficit models also have the 1) tendency to base judgement on a non-relevant majority norm, 2) explain actions of members of certain ethnic groups based on what they can't do instead of can do, and 3) blames the victim for their failure.

Increase skills necessary for a culturally diverse society

Educators cannot just create an atmosphere of cultural equity in the schools, they must also promote skills needed to live in a culturally diverse society. Communication skills are needed in order

to increase empathy, self-awareness and intercultural competency. However, increased empathy, self-awareness and intercultural competency will do no good without the ability to process such information and apply it to ideals of fairness and equity. One must be able to separate feelings of superiority with those of cultural pride in the process of becoming aware of multiple cultural perspectives. Critical thinking skills are needed so that one can process increased self-awareness, cultural awareness and multiple cultural perspectives. Students must also feel compelled to shape inequities in our society. Awareness of inequities are not enough. Social action skills are needed so that students not only feel responsible for change but are empowered to do so. Lastly, students must have the ability to function in mainstream society in order to impact it. This means that students academic skills have to be addressed so that one can have an economic livelihood in the future.

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